

SOUTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is important to a successful school experience. Students are expected to be present for class each day.

Types of absences: School Business, Excused, Parent Permission, College Visits & Unexcused

SCHOOL BUSINESS-Students who are out of the building for school business are not considered absent.

1. School Business activities are learning opportunities that are available outside of the building or classroom.
2. Students involved in these activities are responsible for arranging to have their work from any class missed ready to turn in upon returning to class.
3. Work missed due to a School Business activity must be made up as directed by the teacher.

EXCUSED-An absence is excused in the following instances:

1. Personal illness of the student with official written verification.
2. Official school sponsored activity.
3. Court appearances with official written verification.
4. Medical/Dental appointments with official written verification.
(Parents/guardians are urged to schedule medical or dental appointments after school hours. When this is not possible, the appointment should be scheduled during a study hall or scheduled so that the student will not miss the same class(es) repeatedly.) This is especially important during days in which standardized tests are administered. Parents are strongly urged not to schedule appointments on standardized test days.
5. Death or serious illness in the immediate or extended family. (Official written verification may be required.)
6. Bereavement following the death of an immediate family member (Parent, Sibling, or Grandparent), students may be excused for a total of 3 days. Days missed in addition to these 3 days will be counted as parent permission. A funeral announcement will need to be provided in order to excuse the absence. This total will include any travel time should the funeral be out of town.

An excused absence shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct. Official written verification includes signed doctor, dentist, court or legal documents identifying the office and/or the name of the professional who provided the service.

PARENT PERMISSION

1. Parent permission may be granted for any reason, including personal illness without written verification, provided the parent has contacted the attendance office, by a note or phone call, the day the absence occurs.
2. The student may not exceed five (5) parent permission absence days for the year. If a student exceeds five (5) days of parent permission absences in any class for the year, all parent permission days thereafter are classified as unexcused.
3. Parent permission shall afford the student the privilege of making up all assignments and/or class activities as the teachers direct.
4. Absences for parent permission shall not be granted in conflict with semester examination schedules.

COLLEGE VISITS

Seniors and juniors are allowed two college days for the year, one each semester. These days are to be used for visiting prospective colleges and universities. Request forms are to be picked up in the attendance office and returned to the attendance office by 1:30 p.m. the day prior to the absence. A letter from the college or university, signed by a school official and stating that the student made the visit is required if college leave is to

be granted. The letter is to be submitted to the attendance office on the day the student returns to school. Failure to provide this documentation will result in a parent permission absence.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. An unexcused absence shall be considered to be a willful absence (truant) from school if it is without the knowledge of the student's parents/guardian.
2. Any other absence not considered excused in the two preceding sections will be counted as unexcused.
3. Students on short-term suspension from school (not to exceed ten days) shall be considered absent but excused for the purpose of absenteeism. These students will be expected to make up their school work and may receive full credit upon satisfactory completion. The sole responsibility for completing assigned work rests with the student. All make-up work should be returned to the appropriate teacher upon the student's return to school. No suspended student will be denied the opportunity to take semester tests.
4. A student with four (4) or more unexcused absences per semester may be assigned consequences.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT

The parent/guardian should contact the school attendance clerk by 9:00 a.m. any day that a student will be absent. Parents should provide pertinent information to the attendance clerk. In addition to assisting the school with the attendance record, parent/guardian notification to the school is a security measure to verify the locations of all students. Any other concerns over the child's attendance or tardy record should be addressed with the attendance clerk.

Upon the 5th unexcused absence in any semester a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian notifying him/her that upon the 10th unexcused absence of the same semester the student may be denied promotion or credit. Before a student accumulates the 10th day of unexcused absence for the semester the student, the student's parents, or guardian, may petition the school principal for a conference to address the student's absences (Act 1223 of 2011). Exceptions to this rule will be made in accordance with the student's IEP or 504 plans.

Students with long-term, medically documented illness or injury may be allowed to make up work and may be given assistance in obtaining credit for courses in which they are enrolled.

LEGAL NOTIFICATION

Upon notification by the School District that a student of mandatory school age is no longer attending school or has 10 consecutive absences in any class, the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Prosecuting Attorney will be notified that the student is no longer attending school. Students with unexcused absences in excess of 10 total days in any one semester may be considered delinquent, and appropriate notification to the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Prosecuting Attorney may be made subject to the directions of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Fort Smith School District shall notify the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student 14 years of age or older is no longer attending school, and the Department of Finance and Administration shall suspend the student's learner permit or driver's license until the student re-enrolls and is successfully attending school.

COURSE CREDIT

Credit may be denied to students grades 9-12 enrolled in credit courses when a student has more than 15 total days absent in a semester.

DENIAL OF PROMOTION

Excessive absences may be a basis for denial for promotion or graduation.

Excessive absences (15 days per semester) may be a basis for denial for promotion or graduation. Before a student reaches 15 days of absence in a semester, the parent or guardian may petition the principal for a conference to address the student's absences. The plan to address the absence problem will be formalized into a written agreement to include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the requirements of the agreement.

GRADING

A student who is absent from any given class will be permitted to make up "high leverage" assignments. The student must make arrangements with the teachers on the first day the student returns to class to complete work.

(Students 18 or older)

Students who are 18 years old or older may be dropped from class and/or school if they fail to make adequate academic progress.